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Poetry.

[From the Edinburg Review.]

THE FOOTSTEPS OF DECAY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH.

Oh! Let the soul its slumbers break—
Arouse its senses and awake!
To see how soon
Life, in its glories, glides away,
And the stern footsteps of decay
Come stealing on.

And while we view the rolling tide,
Down which our flowing minutes glide
Away so fast,
Let us the present hour employ,
And dream each future dream a joy
Already past.

Let no vain hope deceive the mind—
No happier let us hope to find
To-morrow than to-day.
Our golden dreams of yore were bright,
Like them the present shall delight—
Like them decay.

Our lives like hasting streams must be,
That into one engulphing sea
Are doomed to fall—
The sea of Death, whose waves roll on
O'er king and kingdom, crown and throne,
And swallow all.

Alike the river's lordly tide,
Alike the humble rivulet's glide
To that sad wave;
Death levels poverty and pride—
The rich and poor sleep side by side
Within the grave.

Our birth is but a starting place;
Life is the running of the race,
And Death the goal:
There all our glittering toys are brought—
That path alone, of all unsought,
Is found of all.

See, then, how poor and little worth
Are all those glittering toys of earth
That lure us here!
Dreams of a sleep that Death must break,
Alas! before it bids us wake,
We disappear.

Long ere the damp of earth can blight,
The cheek's pure glow of red and white
Has passed away:
Youth smiled, and all was heavenly fair—
Age came and laid his finger there,
And where are they?

Where is the strength that spurned decay,
The steps that roved so light and gay
The heart's blithe tone?
The strength is gone, the step is slow,
And joy grows wearisome and woe
When age comes on!

NO TIME LIKE THE OLD TIME.

BY O. W. HOLMES.

There is no time like the old time, when you
and I were young,
When the buds of April bloomed and the
birds of spring-time sung;
The garden's brightest glories by summer
suns are nursed;
But oh! the sweet, sweet violets, the flowers
that opened first.

There is no place like the old place, where
you and I were born,
Where we first oped our eyelids on the
splendors of the morn;
From the milk-white breast that warmed us,
from the clinging arms that bore,
Where the dark eyes glistened o'er us that
will look on us no more.

There is no friend like the old friend who
has shared our morning days;
No greeting like his welcome, no homage
like his praise.
Fame is the scentless flower with gaudy
crown of gold;
But friendship is the breathing rose with
sweets in every fold.

There is no love like the old love that we
courted in our pride:
Though our leaves are falling, falling, and
we're falling side by side,
There are blossoms all around us with the
colors of our dawn,
And we live in borrowed sunshine when the
light of day is gone.

There is no time like the old times—they
shall never be forgot!
There is no place like the old place—keep
green the dear old spot!
There are no friends like our old friends—
may Heaven prolong their lives!
There are no loves like our old loves—God
bless our loving wives!

THE CAT BRIGADE.

Up the roofs, down the roofs,
O'er the tiles onward,
From attic and chimney rushed
More than five hundred!

With tails erect, they went
More than five hundred—
On what fell errand bent
Each neighbor wondered.

Miau-au!" the big Tomeries,
Scratch them all, d—n their eyes,
For his tabbies each Tommy dies—
Over five hundred!"

Forward, brave Scraggy Back,
Forward, young Yellow Jack,
The killers are on your track,
Onward they thundered!

Oh! what a din there was!
Oh! what long lines of claws!
Oh! what gigantic paws!—
Four times five hundred!

Neighbors to the right of them,
Neighbors to the left of them,
Neighbors in front of them,
Trembled and wondered!
English, with upturned nose,
Frenchmen with chilly toes,
Feared and d—d the foes,
Dutchmen far worse than those,
Blitzen'd and dunder'd!

Down through the, then
Chi-whang they went, ten by ten,
Scratching and scaring men,
Downward then thundered!
Lord! how the fur did fly—
Lord! how the babe did cry
As the mad rout went by:
How each sausage man winked his eye
When a Tom blundered!

Broomsticks to right of them,
Slop bowls to left of them,
Bootjacks in front of them,
All around them thundered.
Whiz went the pistol slugs—
Crash! went the water jugs—
Flop! went the garret rugs,
Clattering about their lugs,
While their ranks sundered.

What cared those Tommies brave?
Each had nine lives to save—
Each had a mission high—
Each had a destiny!
Not to be wondered.

Pussies were with them there,
Soft paws and sleeky hair,
Green eyes, so demoniac,
Gleamed through the dusky air,
On the five hundred!

And like bold cats they fell,
Scratching and biting well,
Pealing their dying yell,
Till all the neighbors tell
How that night thundered!
Now they are sleeping low,
Where all fat Tommies go,
Nose to nose, toe to toe,
Diaphragms sundered.

When shall their glory fade?
What a grand charge they made!
How the Olivers wondered,
Honor the charge they made—
Honor the Cat Brigade—
Over five hundred.

Select Story.

WRONGED AND RIGHTED.

BY CAROLINE CONRAD.

"I wish to see Miss Lester," said Vance Whitney to the servant who answered his impatient ring at the door of the Lester mansion, and he spoke with an irate emphasis that startled the girl into a swift vanishing upon her errand, while he strode himself toward the parlor, unguided.

He had not to wait long, though every moment seemed an age to him.

The door swung noiselessly very soon, and Olive Lester came shrinkingly and white as the lillies on her bosom toward him.

He advanced eagerly to meet her, extending his hands, and endeavoring to clasp her. But she shrank from him, dropping her beautiful eyes, as though too frightened to meet his glance, and covering her face with her hands.

"Olive, my little Olive," he said, with a reproachful agony, trying to take her hands from her face.

"No, no!" she cried, wrenching herself away from him. "I'm not your Olive any more, Vance; I—I don't——"

"What, Olive?"

"I don't love you. I thought I did, till *he* came. I have promised to be his wife. Don't blame me, Vance—don't look so at me. I am sorry for you, Vance—I *am* sorry——"

"Tush!" broke in Vance Whitney, his chiselled features convulsing with the rage and anguish of the moment.—"*Whose* wife have you promised to be?" he demanded, almost fiercely, his hand falling heavily upon her delicate shoulder.

She murmured something in a scared voice, very low, but he caught the name, and started as though a viper had stung him.

"You were almost my wife, Olive," he said, in a passionate whisper, "and he was my friend. I may forgive you, whom he has beguiled; but I will never forgive him, till I have punished him!"

The next instant Olive was alone, and Vance Whitney, with his hat crushed low upon his brows, was hurrying down the street, as though pursued by the very vengeance he longed to call down upon his false friend.

He remembered that morning, as he stood in Ernest Evermont's spacious library, just ten years from that day, his hand closing with an iron grip upon a piece of paper it held, his deep-set eyes fastened relentless and stern upon the wretched man who cowered before him, unable to lift his white face or steady his shaking hands, or do anything but moan in a quivering voice:

"Have mercy! God knows, I was only tempted to do it in the hope to save from beggary and ruin my wife and my child. Be merciful for *her* sake, Vance."

"For *her* sake you stole from me, with deliberate beguiling," Vance said, with bitter sarcasm, as thrusting the paper in his pocket, he left the room.

As he was descending the steps of the verandah outside, a shower of roses came pelting in a fragrant avalanche upon him, and a laugh gushingly sweet as the thrill of a mocking bird, gurgled out from somewhere among the scarlet hearted blossoms that had climed to the very roof of the verandah, and lay there in bright drifts of perfume and color.

He flung a dark look overhead—a pretty jest, this, to play upon a man bent upon the errand he was—and he saw peeping at him through the leaves two eyes black with mischievous fun and sparkle, two round dimpled arms, overflowing still with roses, and poising themselves to repeat the pretty infliction which had just so shocked him.

The child stared a little at sight of his face, and dropped her roses, saying, in a voice as sweet as the laugh had been:

"I am sorry—I thought it was papa."

Vance Whitney gazed at the pretty creature like a man in a trance. Suddenly he turned, and swiftly retraced his steps to the library, in which Ernest Evermont still sat, his head bowed to the table in the extremity of his despair.—Vance paused in the doorway and looked at him.

"Ernest," he said, "there is one condition upon which I will forgive this wrong, and that other deeper one you did me long ago."

Evermont looked up in half delerious questioning.

"Name it."

"Give me your child."

As the last word left his lips, he almost recoiled from the look of despairing anger with which Evermont, starting from his seat, regarded him.

"My child, my little Olive? Man, wretch, dastard, what is it you ask?—What has my pretty darling done that you should wish to harm her?"

He held out his arms as he spoke, and the child, who had descended from the verandah roof, and followed Vance in, sprung into them, nestling her curls upon his shoulder, and looking thence a childish defiance at the stranger, strangely at variance with the roguish brightness that had clad her lovely little face before.

Vance's stern but handsome features softened slightly.

"I would not harm a hair of her head, Ernest," he said in a low voice.

Ernest was pressing kisses upon his child's face. He looked up fiercely.

"What then?"

"You have other children—I have neither wife nor child. Give me this child to dwell in my desolate home, to rear tenderly, carefully, as you could rear her; give her to me, to be my wife in time.—You shall see her as often as you like. She shall have every advantage, every luxury at her command that wealth can bestow. You will not? Then take the consequences."

He turned away, and Evermont, groaning, "Oh, my God?" let the child slip from his nerveless arms to the floor. But she clung to him, saying, in her soft, sweet voice:

"Oh, papa, papa, what shall I do for you?"

"Olive," he said, suddenly, "would you go and live with that man away from all of us, to save mamma and me, and Georgie and Fred, from a great, great trouble?"

"What trouble, papa?" the child asked, her large eyes dilating.

"He will drive us out of our pretty home here, and make mamma and your little brothers go and live in just such an old house as Betty does."

"Will he?" Olive said slowly, her face growing scared, but her eyes tearless. "I—guess I'll run after him, sha'n't I, and——"

She darted from the room in the middle of the sentence, and overtook Vance Whitney at the avenue gate. She was breathless with rancing, so that she could not speak, but seized his hand, and drew him unresistingly back to her father.

"You accept my condition?" Vance demanded, as he entered the library again.

"I must, if she will go with you willingly. God knows what her mother will say to it, though," Evermont said, brokenly.

"You will represent the matter to her exactly as it stands She will understand that it *must* be. I will see you again to-morrow. Meanwhile, prepare her for what is inevitable."

The June afternoon was bright, the June roses hanging in as vivid clusters as they had that morning a week before, when Olive Evermont had pelted Vance Whitney with them. But Olive herself, as she came out under their drooping fragrance, and entering the waiting carriage, was driven away to her future home, the grand, gloomy house in which Vance Whitney lived—Olive herself had changed very much in that short week. She looked pale and ill, poor child, and there were great, dark rings about the soft, bright eyes. Vance Whitney led her into the house with stately and ceremonious politeness, as though she had already been the wife he meant her to become—the lady of his superb but gloomy mansion.

The pretty child shrank from him, though she tried not to, and a frown distorted his regular brows

"Have you learned already to hate me, Olive?" he asked.

"I don't hate you, sir," she said, timidly lifting her softness to his; "I'm just sorry for you, and—I'm—afraid of you, too."

Her lips trembled.

He was touched. Old and *tender* memories pressed upon him in a flood.—Patting her gently into a seat, he asked, kindly:

"Why are you sorry for me, my child."

"Because I think you must have a very bad heart, sir," she said, scared, but speaking with the blunt sincerity of a child.

The tall, stern man knelt, and putting the little, fluttering, childish hands to his lips, said:

"Listen to me, Olive. My heart *is* bad, and if you are sorry for that, you ought to wish to make it good."

"I?"

"My little girl, if any goodness ever enters my heart, it will have to be through you."

He put her hands again to his lips, and rose to his feet.

"You are complete mistress here, Olive. I am a lonely, sad man—bad, too, according to you—but I mean to try to make you happy."

And that was the beginning of that strange adoption of Olive Evermont by Vance Whitney.

He kept his word. Every indulgence—every gratification that money or the most watchful kindness could procure for her, Olive had. She saw her own family, too, often as she chose, though never in the presence of her strange guardian, and she grew in time quite at home in the grand house which her coming seemed to fill with sunshine. He kept his word, but he exacted the letter of the bond so far. He never suffered any of them to forget that she was to be his wife in time. No very dreadful fate that, one would think; for Vance Whitney was a grand and stately looking gentleman, handsomer than most of those whom Olive met, and possessed of great wealth. He never wearied her with his presence either. He watched her often for hours when she was unconscious of his scrutiny; but he spent little time in her actual society.

As Olive grew older and recognized slowly what that fate was to which she was destined, she grew silent, and shy, and uncommunicative, even with her mother. She grew pale as death if her future husband but looked at her, or in some rare moments her emotion burst all bounds, and in the solitude of her chamber she bewailed her unhappy fate to the blank walls.

At eighteen she was as much lovelier than Olive Lester, her mother, had been, as a moss rose tree is lovelier than its plainer sisters whose stems are unsheathed in velvety emerald. Nothing could excel the liquid radience of her soft, black eyes, the aerial grace of her movements, the silver, sweet music of her voice.

It was another June afternoon when Vance Whitney sought her presence in the pretty boudoir, every one of whose exquisite appointments he had himself chosen. She expected him, and was waiting, watching the sunshine transfused in pink brightness through the rosy window shades, her cheeks hectic with fevered flushes, and her very lips quivering with suppressed excitement.

She lifted the silky black eyelashes, and drooped them again quickly at sight of him, not noting that he looked like a man who had passed the night in watching. He was quite calm, though, and stood looking down at her sadly almost.

"Alive," he said, taking her hand gently.

But she drew it away from him with passionate petulance.

He shut his eyes a moment, and his face whitned a little. Then he went on:

"I have learned in these years to love you as I believe man never loved woman before. That old love which struck at the sinews of my manhood, beside this which I have for you, is like the brooklet near the mountain torrent. Till lately, I thought nothing could make me yield you. But I will not have a loveless wife. My love makes me strong enough to give you up. My child, you are free as though you had never seen me."

He put a sealed envelope in her hand, directed to Ernest Evermont, said, "The carriage waits your commands," and left her.

"Free from that hateful bond—free," she murmured, dashing the tears from her eyes, and wondering what made her heart sink so under her little bodice.—"Now for home—dear, dear home."

But she cried all the way, try as she would not to.

They were surprised somewhat at home to see her, but glad, and heard her story with varied emotions. Ernest Evermont as he dropped upon the flames the little paper to which he had wrongfully, and to such lasting punishing, put another's name, drew his child to him, and kissed her sadly.

She rested in his arms a moment.—Suddenly she lifted herself, her beautiful eyes dim again with tears, her little hands extended in entreaty:

"Papa, mamma, I'm going back.—Come with me, to tell him what I never, *never* can."

Vance Whitney sat in his lone dark library, just as he had sat ever since he saw the last glimpse of Olive entering the carriage—his attitude hopeless, his eyes seeing only vacancy. Pain wrapped all his senses so, that he did not hear them as they came in.

Mrs. Evermont could hardly see him for tears; his desolate life had been a living reproach to her.

"Vance," she said gently, her voice broken, "my little girl cannot be happy away from you. She wants to come back and live with you always. May she?"

He turned with a flash, voicelessly extending his arms. A slender little figure glided from the shadows by the door, and nestled in them, sobbing.

"You don't love me?" he questioned, incredulously, holding her close.

"Yes, I do, Vance—I do, I do; but if you hadn't sent me away from you, I'm afraid I should never have found it out."

"God is more merciful to me than I deserve," he said in a low voice, kissing her.

So the old pain and wrong, the long hardness of heart, were swallowed up at last in overwhelming joy.

FAMILY COURTESIES.—In the family, the law of pleasing ought to extend from the highest to the lowest. You are bound to please your children; and your children are bound to please each other; and you are bound to please your servants, if you expect them to please you. Some men are pleasant in the household, and nowhere else. I have known such men. They were good fathers and kind husbands. If you had seen them in their own homes you would have thought they were almost angels; but if you had seen them in the street, or the counting house, or anywhere else outside of their own houses, you would have thought them almost demoniac. But the opposite is apt to be the case. When we are among our neighbors, or among strangers we hold ourselves with self-respect, and endeavor to act with propriety; but when we go home, we say to ourselves, 'I have played a part long enough, and now I am going to act naturally.' So we sit down, and are ugly, snappish, blunt and disagreeable. We lay aside those little courtesies that make the roughest floor smooth, and the hardest things like velvet, and which make life pleasant. We are apt to expend all our politeness in places where it will be profitable—where it will bring silver and gold.

FOURTEEN WAYS BY WHICH PEOPLE GET SICK.—1st. Eating too fast, and swallowing food imperfectly masticated.

2d. Taking too much fluid during meals.

3. Drinking poisonous whisky and other intoxicating liquors.

4. Keeping late hours at night, and sleeping too late in the morning.

5. Wearing the clothes so tight as to impede circulation.

6. Wearing thin shoes.

7. Neglecting to take sufficient exercise to keep the hands and feet warm.

8. Neglecting to wash the body sufficiently to keep the pores of the skin open.

9. Exchanging the warm clothing worn in a warm room during the day, for the light costumes and exposures incident to evening parties.

10. Starving the stomach to gratify a vain and foolish passion for dress.

11. Keeping up a constant excitement by fretting the mind with borrowed troubles.

12. Employing cheap doctors, and swallowing quack nostrums for every imaginary ill.

13. Taking the meals at irregular intervals.

14. Reading the trashy and exciting literature of the day, and going crazy on politics.

A GOOD RULE.—A certain man who is very rich now, was very poor when he was a boy. When asked how he got his riches, he replied:

"My father taught me never to play till my work was finished, and never to spend my money till I had earned it.—If I had but an hour's work to do in a day, I must do that the first thing, and in an hour. And after this I was allowed to play; and then I could play with much more pleasure than if I had the thought of an unfinished task before my mind. I early formed the habit of doing everything in time, and it soon became easy to do so. It is to this I owe my prosperity."

Let every one who reads this do likewise.

TRUTH.—Truth is an eternal element. It is an essence of divinity. Man must grasp this essence; he must press it to his soul; it must be his spiritual life; and rule all his thoughts and actions.—Truth must ever be with him, continually abiding with him. Only in this way can he be natural. Only so can he resemble the Redeemer. To be unlike God is to be unnatural. 'Tis true, opposites exist. Light has its shade, cold is opposed to heat. Hate is antagonistic to love. Truth is opposed by error. But with one path, one genuine course remains for him to follow. It is the path of right, of truth, of justice, of love, and of unswerving fidelity to God. Only so can the soul live out its noblest attributes, and harmonize with the purposes of the Creator. Moral purity can alone qualify us for this mission.

IF you have once been in company with an idle person, it is enough. You need never go again. You have heard all he knows. And he has had no opportunity of learning anything new; for idle people make no improvements.